

INDIATOBACCOWATCH (ITW) – Newsletter

January 2016

Volume II

Edition 2

HEADLINES OF THE MONTH:

- ❖ *Philip Morris International in talks with Godfrey Philips to take over cigarette brands*
- ❖ *Punjab lifts Gutkha manufacturing ban; roll backs decision*
- ❖ *Delhi government asks film actors to stop promoting pan masala; gets response*
- ❖ *7 year jail term and Rs. 1 lakh fine for selling cigarettes to minors*
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Philip Morris International in talks with Godfrey Philips to take over cigarette brands

According to media reports, Global tobacco giant Philip Morris International has initiated talks with its Indian partner, KK Modi-led Godfrey Philips India (GPI), in an attempt to take control of the cigarette brands. Reacting to the development, the scrip gained 4.16 per cent to hit a high of Rs 1,449.

Punjab lifts Gutkha manufacturing ban; roll backs decision

The Punjab government took a major step backward in its journey towards tobacco control by lifting the ban on manufacture of gutkha, pan masala and other processed, flavoured and scented food products containing tobacco or nicotine as ingredients. Following this, the Punjab chief minister Mr. Prakash Singh Badal ordered a ban on the manufacturing of food products containing tobacco or nicotine like 'gutkha' and 'pan masala' in the state with immediate effect

Delhi government asks film actors to stop promoting pan masala; gets response

Delhi government's health department has written to 6 Bollywood film actors – Ajay Devgn, Shah Rukh Khan, Saif Ali Khan, Arbaz Khan, Govinda and Sunny Leone to stop promoting pan masalas. Further the letter requests the actors to join in anti-tobacco campaigns. In response, actress Sunny Leone on Tuesday said that she will not sign any further deals to promote pan masala and other tobacco related products. "I do not

Letter sent by Health department states "Some of these pan masala ads are surrogate advertisements of tobacco products through which the tobacco companies try to promote the brands of tobacco products"

smoke. I have watched people smoking and it does not look appealing at all. I have seen people die of cancer. Even if this particular product does not have tobacco and if it is true that it has some cancer-causing ingredients, then I am against it," she added.

7 year jail term and Rs. 1 lakh fine for selling cigarettes to minors

To shield minors from the harmful effects of smoking and tighten the noose around those selling pan masala, gutka and cigarettes to children, the government has for the first time made providing tobacco products to children under 18 years a serious criminal offence under Juvenile Justice (Care and Protection of Children) Act, 2015 which will invite a jail term of up to seven years and a Rs 1 lakh fine.

Gujarat sees highest tobacco sowing this year

Tobacco sowing in the State of Gujarat has touched one of the highest in recent history exceeding 1,52,000 hectares of area. Last year there was crop damage due to unseasonal rains, which caused prices to surge. This seems to have lured more farmers into tobacco cultivation," said a senior official from State Agriculture Department. According to traders, raw tobacco prices in the State had touched ₹2,700 per 20 kg, up almost 100 per cent from what was in the previous year. But with increased sowing, we feel prices will fall by at least 50 per cent," said Bakul Patel, a tobacco processor based at Vadod village in Anand district.

"Raw tobacco prices had shot up last year. Gujarat produces mainly kalkatti tobacco which is used for bidis and gutkha. In spite of the ban, bidis continue to be sold in the state as is loose tobacco"

Quinoa, Chia alternatives for tobacco

While Chia and Quinoa that are known for their high nutritional values could be viable alternatives for tobacco in Mysuru. Santosh Nayar of Raithamitra Farmers Producers Co Ltd said many farmers in the tobacco growing areas of Periyapatna, H D Kote taluks who were affected by wild elephant menace, have tried Quinoa and Chia. He said CFTRI has developed a technology that can remove bitterness in Quinoa and Chia and a farmer is paid Rs 200 per kg for Quinoa and Chia.

ITC Ltd loses domain rights to ITC bank

ITC Ltd has lost to a Kerala-based cooperative bank its exclusive rights to the 'itcbank.com' domain. On December 24, the World Intellectual Property Organisation (WIPO) at Geneva disallowed a complaint of cyber-squatting by the FMCG-to-hotel-to-agribusiness-to-IT conglomerate against Irinjalakuda Town Cooperative Bank Ltd (ITC Bank) in Thrissur district in Kerala. The sole WIPO panelist found that the respondent was running a legitimate banking business

IndiaTobaccoWatch (ITW) is an initiative by organizations working in tobacco control across India to monitor, document and counter the activities of tobacco industry. Spread the word.

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